

Veterans Health Administration
National Social Work Program
Care Management and Social Work Service



**Guide to Understanding the National Guard and
Reserve Forces**

Revised March 2009

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Introduction

Following the distribution of “Military Facts for Non-Military Social Workers” document, the members of the VHA Social Work Staffing & Clinical Practice Committee began to evaluate the continued need for tools to enhance the practice of social work within VHA. With the demographic shift of veterans and with the significantly increasing numbers of activated members of the Reserves and National Guard seeking services through VHA, our committee has elected to develop another resource tool that will assist social workers in providing much needed services to this unique group of veterans. Please note that this information may continue to evolve and change, as the rules and regulations governing services to these veterans also evolve and change.

One of our greatest challenges is that VA staff often have little knowledge of the National Guard and Reserves and may not have a good understanding of the differences between them. The National Guard operates under the auspices of the individual states in which they are located. They may be called to duty by order of the state, or may be called up by executive order to federal duty. The Reserves operate under the umbrella of the individual branches of the military. During the OEF/OIF conflict, both the National Guard and Reserves have provided significant support and augmentation to the military in their activation and deployment overseas. The purpose of this document is to assist VA staff in understanding the makeup, history and purpose of the National Guard and Reserves, as well as their place and relevance to the current conflict.

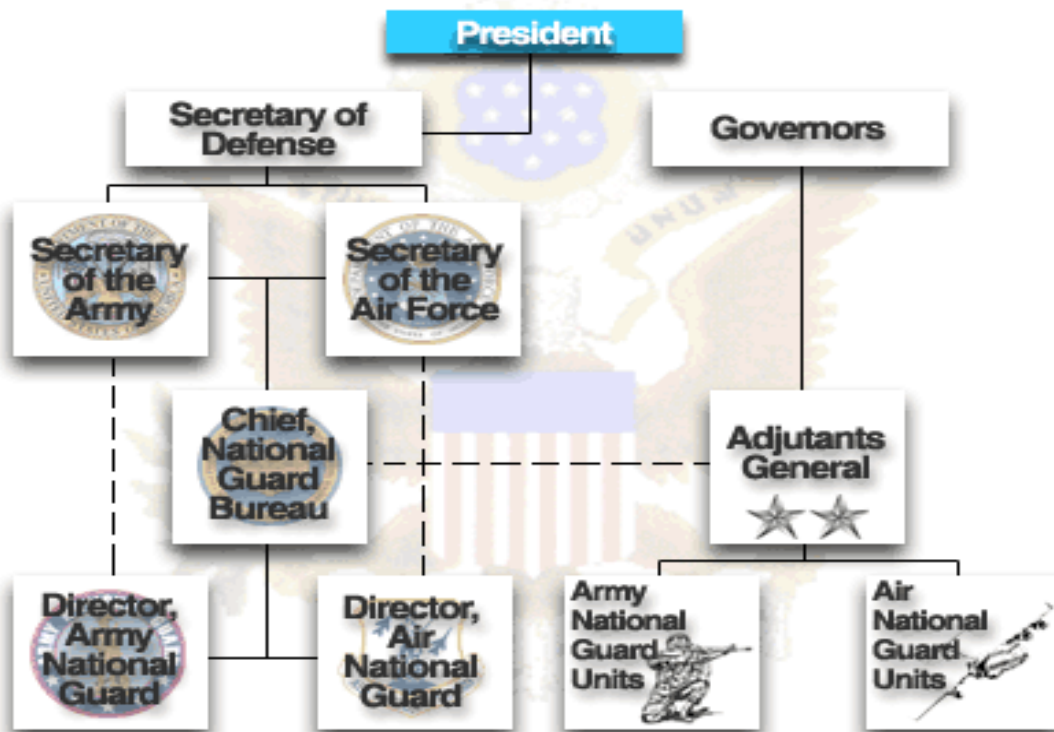
Chapter 1

HISTORY OF NATIONAL GUARD

Many National Guard Units have been deployed to support Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF). Men and women serving our country in this capacity deserve special attention and have unique needs when returning from combat. Like the “Military Facts for Non-Military Social Workers” document created by the VHA Social Work Staffing and Clinical Practice Committee, this document serves to address multiple aspects of the National Guard and to educate VA providers so they can provide the best possible care to these returning veterans.

Organizational Structure

First, it is important to understand the organizational structure of the National Guard. The National Guard is divided into two separate branches: Army National Guard and Air National Guard. They are usually under the supervision of each State's Governor, generally overseen by the State Adjutant General.



The National Guard, the oldest component of the Armed Forces of the United States and one of the nation's longest-enduring institutions, celebrated its 370th birthday on December 13, 2006. The National Guard traces its history back to the earliest English colonies in North America. Responsible for their own defense, the colonists drew on the English military tradition and organized their able-bodied male citizens into militias.

The colonial militias protected their fellow citizens from attack, invasion and later helped to win the Revolutionary War. Following independence, the authors of the Constitution empowered Congress to "provide for organizing, arming, and disciplining the militia." However, recognizing the militia's state role, the Founding Fathers reserved the appointment of officers and training of the militia to the states. Today's National Guard still remains a dual state-federal force.

Throughout the 19th century, the size of the regular Army was small, and the militia provided the bulk of the troops during the Mexican War, the early months of the Civil War, and the Spanish-American War. In 1903, important national defense legislation increased the role of the National Guard (as the militia was now called) as a Reserve force for the U.S. Army. In World War I, which the U.S. entered in 1917, the National Guard made up 40% of the U.S. combat divisions in France. In World War II, National Guard units were among the first to deploy overseas and the first to fight.

Following World War II, National Guard aviation units, some of them dating back to World War I, became the Air National Guard, the nation's newest Reserve component. The Guard stood on the frontiers of freedom during the Cold War, sending soldiers and airmen to fight in Korea and to reinforce NATO during the Berlin crisis of 1961-1962. During the Vietnam War, almost 23,000 Army and Air Guardsmen were called up for a year of active duty; some 8,700 were deployed to Vietnam. Over 75,000 Army and Air Guard members were called upon to help bring a swift end to Desert Storm in 1991.

Since that time, the National Guard has seen the nature of its Federal mission change, with more frequent "call ups" in response to crises in Haiti, Bosnia, Kosovo, and the skies over Iraq. Most recently, following the attacks of September 11, 2001, more than 50,000 Guard members were called up by both their States and the Federal government to provide security at home and combat terrorism abroad. Today, tens of thousands of Guard members are serving in Iraq and Afghanistan, as the National Guard continues its historic dual mission, providing to the states units trained and equipped to protect life and property, while providing to the nation units trained, equipped and ready to defend the United States and its interests, all over the globe.

Source: <http://www.ngb.army.mil/about/>

Natural Disaster Response

Additionally, National Guard members are deployed to assist local operations when natural disasters strike. The largest stateside deployment in National Guard history occurred in August 2005 when Hurricane Katrina struck the Gulf Coast. Forty thousand Guard members were deployed to the area and guard units from all 50 states, three U.S. territories and the District of Columbia assisted in the recovery efforts.

Fighting American Wars Since 1636

1637	Pequot War
1754 – 1758	French and Indian War
1775 – 1783	Revolutionary War
1812	War of 1812
1846 – 1848	Mexican War
1861 – 1865	Civil War
1898	Spanish American War
1917 – 1918	World War I
1941 – 1946	World War II
1950 – 1953	Korean War
1961 – 1962	Berlin Crisis
1964 – 1973	Vietnam War
1990 – 1991	Persian Gulf War
1995	Bosnia
1999	Kosovo
2001 – present	War on Terrorism

Federal Mobilizations of the National Guard since 1900

Army Guard	Air Guard
World War I – 18 Divisions	
World War II – 19 Divisions	World War II – 29 Squadrons
Korean War – 8 Korean War 8 Divisions	Korean War – 66 Squadrons
Berlin Crisis – 2 Divisions and 104 non- Divisional Units	Berlin Crisis – 40 Squadrons
Vietnam War – 34 Units	Vietnam War – 5 Squadrons Persian
Persian Gulf War – 398 Units	Persian Gulf – 10,456 Airmen
LA Riots – 11,000 soldiers	Northern/Southern Watch – Ongoing
Haiti – 845 soldiers	Kosovo Air Campaign – 3,266 Airmen
Bosnia – over 11,000 soldiers so far	Bosnia – over 9,000 Airmen so far
OEF/OIF – over 30,000 soldiers so far	OEF/OIF – over 20,000 Airmen so far

Chapter 2

HISTORY OF THE RESERVES

First, it's important to understand that there are Air Force, Army, Navy, Coast Guard and Marine Corp Reserves units. Each has its own long, distinguished place within the history of the US military. The oldest of the reserve branches is the Army Reserve, which was established on April 23, 1908 and originally called "Medical Reserve Corps." Next, Franklin D. Roosevelt, then the assistant to the Secretary of the Navy, urged Congress to pass legislation for a federally funded official military force. Legislation passed on March 3, 1915 created the Navy Reserve Force. On June 3, 1916 the Air Force Reserves were established followed by the Marine Corp Reserves on August 29, 1916. And, on February 19, 1941, the Coast Guard Reserve was established by the passage of the Coast Guard Reserve and Auxiliary Act. Even prior to 1908, when the Army Reserves were established, the Navy had a reserve command called "citizen sailors" who were charged with protecting the United States from British enemies.

For detailed information regarding the history of each branch please visit the Websites below:

Navy - <http://www.navyreserve.com/about/history.jsp>

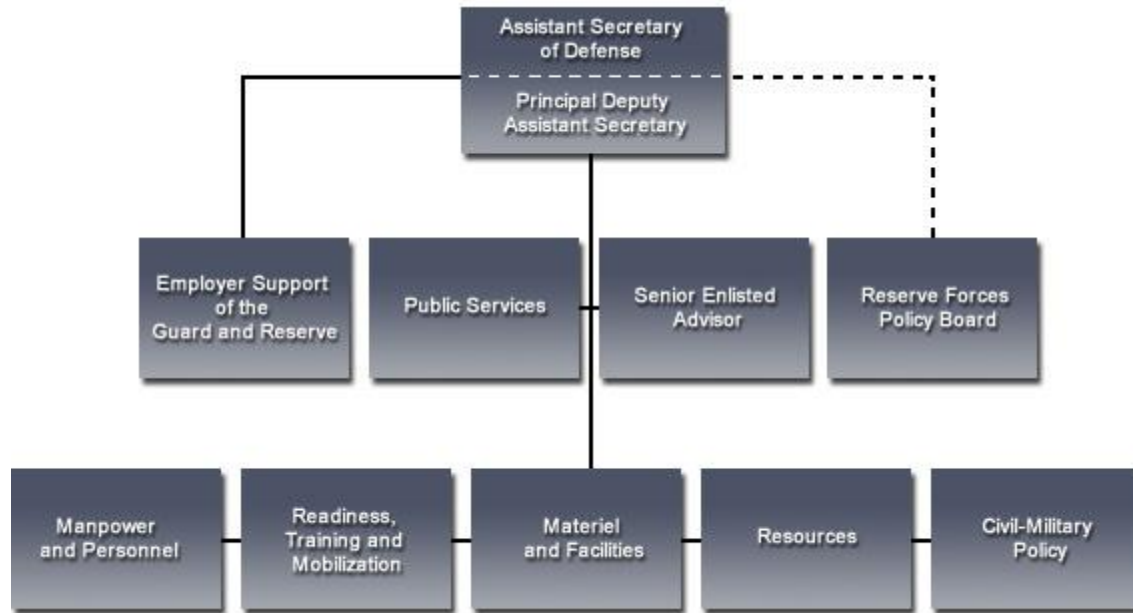
Air Force - <http://www.afrc.af.mil/library/history/index.asp>

Army - <http://www.armyreserve.army.mil/ARWEB/MISSION/History.htm>

Coast Guard - <http://www.uscg.mil/history/default.asp>

Marine Corp - <http://www.answers.com/topic/the-marine-corps-reserve>

DoD Reserve Affairs - Currently, the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense – Reserve Affairs (www.defenselink.mil/ra/index.html) is charged with the mission "to serve as Principal Staff Assistant and advisor to the Secretary of Defense with responsibility for overall supervision of matters which involve the Reserve components, including the Army National Guard, Army Reserve, Naval Reserve, Marine Corps Reserve, Air National Guard, Air Force Reserve and Coast Guard Reserve".



Current Mobilized National Guard and Reserve Units listed by state

A cumulative roster of all National Guard and Reserve personnel who are currently mobilized can be found at:

<http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Aug2008/d20080806ngr.pdf>

Or <http://www.military.com/deployment>

Chapter 3

VHA ELIGIBILITY

VHA eligibility for members of the National Guard and Reserves can be confusing to those who have primarily worked with veterans who served on regular active duty service in the US Armed Forces. National Guard members are eligible for VHA services if they were mobilized as a result of a Federal Executive order for deployment to a designated combat zone. If they were mobilized as a result of an order of the State (i.e. support of a disaster area) they are not activated for the purposes of the federal government, and this time period will not count for VHA eligibility. Reserve members must be activated on a full time basis, and must be serving in an operational or support role, as opposed to a training role.

In 1998, VA was authorized to provide a broad range of health care services to honorably discharged U.S. veterans who served on active duty in a theater of combat operations during a period of war after the Persian Gulf War or in combat against a hostile force during a period of hostilities after November 11, 1998. These veterans including Reservists and members of the National Guard are eligible for 5 years of free healthcare after leaving the military; for any injury or illness that is thought to be combat related.

Under this authority any illness or injury that is not clinically thought to be related to combat service is subject to a possible co-payment. VA clinicians make these determinations with utmost flexibility.

Additionally, eligibility for dental services is dependent on the veteran applying for services within 180 days of discharge from active duty **and** block 17 on the DD-214 must indicate the veteran did not receive dental services in the 90 days prior to their date of discharge. Dental eligibility applies to members of the National Guard, Reserves and all other veterans of regular active duty service in the US Armed Forces. The dental benefit is a limited benefit, generally for one course of treatment.

It is imperative that social workers who work with members of the Reserve or National Guard remember to refer them to VBA to file appropriate claims for service related injuries or illnesses and to apply for non-health care benefits. For assistance in filing claims, veteran should be encouraged to seek the assistance of a Veteran's Service Officer (VSO). VSOs can be either through a Veteran's Service Organization, like the VFW, American Legion, DAV, or through their State or County Veterans Office. This will help address continuity of care needs for those requiring ongoing medical/hospital/nursing home services after the 5 year period, specifically related to their combat related illnesses/injuries. For questions about eligibility, check with your facility's Health Eligibility staff.

Social work staff should be aware of additional VA programs such as the Gulf War Registry and the War Related Illness and Injury Study Center in order to refer veterans to seek appropriate assistance through these programs when needed.

<http://vaww.registries.aac.va.gov>
www.va.gov/wriisc-dc/
www1.va.gov/environgents/
www1.va.gov/gulfwar

Information and resources related to Reservist and National Guard Member eligibility may be found on the VA Office of Seamless Transition Website:

http://www.seamlesstransition.va.gov/res_guard.asp

Social workers may also contact their medical center's eligibility office.

Chapter 4

NATIONAL GUARD/RESERVES RESOURCES AND HELPFUL WEBSITES

A Quick Reference:

VHA Health Care	http://www1.va.gov/health/index.asp
Returning Veterans	www.seamlesstransition.va.gov/
Survivors	www.vba.va.gov/survivors/index.htm
VA Facilities	www.va.gov/directory/guide/home.asp
VA Forms	www.va.gov/vaforms/
VA Benefits Payment Rates	www.vba.va.gov/bln/21/Rates/
Education Benefits	www.gibill.va.gov/
Home Loan Guaranty	www.homeloans.va.gov/
Life Insurance	www.insurance.va.gov/
Voc Rehab	www.vba.va.gov/bln/vre/index.htm
Burial and Memorial Benefits	www.cem.va.gov/
Veterans Employment and Training	www.dol.gov/vets/
Federal Jobs	www.usajobs.opm.gov/
Veterans Preference	www.opm.gov/veterans/index.asp
Records	http://www.archives.gov/veterans/
Department of Defense	www.defenselink.mil/

ADULT FAMILY MEMBERS

Post Deployment

Deployment Guide for Families of Deploying Soldiers. Separation and Reunion Handbook

www.hooah4health.com/deployment/familymatters/reunion.htm#

Returning from the War Zone: A Guide for Families

http://www.ncptsd.va.gov/ncmain/ncdocs/manuals/nc_manual_returnwarz_gp.html?opm=1&rr=rr1562&srt=d&echorr=true

CLINICIANS

The Iraq War Clinician Guide, 2nd Edition

National Center for PTSD

http://www.ncptsd.va.gov/ncmain/ncdocs/manuals/nc_manual_iwcguide.html?opm=1&rr=rr1538&srt=d&echorr=true

General Clinician Information

National Center for PTSD

www.ncptsd.va.gov

Management of Post-Traumatic Stress

Clinical Practice Guideline Working Group, Veterans Health Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs and Health Affairs, Department of Defense, December 2003.

www.oqp.med.va.gov/cpg/PTSD/PTSD_Base.htm

Traumatic Grief: Symptomatology and Treatment for the Iraq War Veteran

A National Center for PTSD Fact Sheet by Ilona Pivar, Ph.D.

http://www.ncptsd.va.gov/ncmain/ncdocs/fact_shts/traumatic_grief.html?opm=1&rr=rr30&srt=d&echorr=true

Recommendations for Pharmacological Treatment of Acute Stress Reactions

A National Center for PTSD Fact Sheet

http://www.ncptsd.va.gov/ncmain/ncdocs/fact_shts/fs_medication_disaster.html?opm=1&rr=rr56&srt=d&echorr=true

PTSD and your Family

A National Center for PTSD Fact Sheet by Eve B. Carlson, Ph.D. and Joseph Ruzek, Ph.D.

http://www.ncptsd.va.gov/ncmain/ncdocs/fact_shts/ptsd_and_your_family.html?opm=1&rr=rr1756&srt=d&echorr=true

Reintegration Fact Sheet for Providers

Courage to Care, Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences

www.usuhs.mil/psy/RFSP.pdf

Resources for Working with Military Personnel and Their Families (Ken Pope's Website)

www.kspope.com/torvic/war.php

American Psychological Association's "Resilience in a Time of War"

<http://www.apahelpcenter.org/featuredtopics/feature.php?id=43>

Military Family Research Institute of Purdue University
<http://www.mfri.purdue.edu>

COMMUNITY

Helping Children and Youth Cope with the Deployment of a Parent in the Military Reserves (has information for parents, teachers, pediatricians, etc)

SOFAR (Strategic Outreach to Families of All Reservists) Guide

http://www.pcfine.org/sofarandguard/sofar_children_pamphlet.pdf

How Communities can Support the Children and Families of those serving in the National Guard or Reserves.

Military Child Education Coalition

www.militarychild.org/pdfs/GuardReserveForWeb.pdf

Operation: Military Kids

Army's efforts to support youth of National Guard & Army reserve families

<http://www.operationmilitarykids.org/public/home.aspx>

EMPLOYMENT

The Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) was established in 1972 to promote cooperation and understanding between Reserve component members and their civilian employers and to assist in the resolution of conflicts arising from an employee's military commitment. It is the lead DoD organization for this mission under DoD Directive 1250.1. <http://esgr.org/about.asp>

The ESGR Ombudsmen Services Program was established to address potential problems arising among the nation's employers regarding the phasing out of the "draft" or conscription of people into the military by the Selective Service and the establishment of the all-volunteer force. There was concern that the nation's employers, who were used to some of their employees serving in the National Guard and Reserve as an alternative to compulsory active duty service, might question the necessity of such service in a purely voluntary military system. The Ombudsmen Service's Program was established in response. It provides information, counseling, and informal mediation of issues relating to compliance with the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA)

American Job Bank - A national on-line site where Chapter 31 job seekers and employers connect. When you register as a job seeker, you can search job openings

and post your resume. Employers can announce jobs and fill positions with this national resource of skilled and qualified employees.

<http://dva.jobsearch.org/>

The Occupational Information Network - O*NET database takes the place of the Dictionary of Occupational Titles (DOT) as the nation's primary source of occupational information. The O*NET database and related products will help millions of employers, workers, educators, and students make informed decisions about education, training, career choices, and work. This O*NET webpage correlates Military Occupational Codes with civilian codes.

<http://online.onetcenter.org/>

SBA's Office of Veterans Business Development (OVBD) - OVBD is dedicated to serving the veteran entrepreneur by formulating, executing and promoting policies and programs of the agency that provides assistance to veterans seeking to start and develop small businesses.

<http://www.sba.gov/VETS/>

USAJOBS - is a United States Office of Personnel Management Website. USAJOBS is the Federal Government's official one-stop source for Federal jobs and employment information.

<http://www.usajobs.opm.gov/>

Vocational Rehabilitation-To receive an evaluation for VR&E services, a veteran must:

Have received, or will receive, a discharge that is other than dishonorable; have a service-connected disability rating of at least 10%, and submit a completed application for VR&E services.

To obtain further information, visit their Website at: <http://www.vba.va.gov/bln/vre>

Center for Veterans Enterprise -The Website for veteran owned businesses, "Veteran-owned small business concern" is a small business concern not less than 51% of which is owned by one or more veterans or, in the case of any publicly owned business, not less than 51% of the stock of which is owned by one or more veterans; and the management and daily business operations of which are controlled by one or more veterans (If you have other than dishonorable discharge from the U.S. Armed Services, or, for National Guard or Reserve members, were activated to Federal Duty, you have veteran status for this program). <http://www.vetbiz.gov/>

Returning to Work: Tips for Service Members and Employers - National Mental Health Association. www.nmha.org/reunions/infoReturnWork.cfm

Information Specific to National Guard and Reserve Personnel and Their Employers - A National Center for PTSD Fact Sheet

http://www.ncptsd.va.gov/ncmain/ncdocs/fact_shts/fs_info_ngrsvspecific.html?opm=1&r=rr115&srt=d&echorr=true

FAMILIES

Military OneSource - See listing under Health

National Military Family Association

www.nmfa.org/site/PageServer?pagename=homepage

National Guard Family Program

<http://www.guardfamily.org>

Operation Healthy Reunions (part of the National Mental Health Association)

www.nmha.org/reunions/index.cfm

Army Reserve Family Programs

<http://www.myarmyonesource.com/default.aspx>

DEPLOYMENT

Deployment LINK

http://deploymentlink.osd.mil/deploy/family/family_support.shtml

Surviving Deployment

www.survivingdeployment.com

Military.com Deployment & the Family

<http://www.military.com/deployment>

DoD Deployment Health support

<http://www.deploymentlink.osd.mil/deploymentTips.jsp>

Family Support of the Guard & Reserve

http://deploymentlink.osd.mil/deploy/guard_reserves/rng_fsp.shtml

POST DEPLOYMENT

Homecoming Preparedness for Veterans and Families: A Self-Help Guide to Ease the Transition from Deployment and the Military to Civilian Life

Veterans and Families Homecoming Support Network

http://www.veteransandfamilies.citymax.com/f/Homecoming_Preparedness_Guide_Version_1.4.pdf

Being a Couple Again

National Mental Health Association

<http://www.nmha.org/reunions/infoCouple.cfm>

A Soldier and Family Guide to Redeploying

DOD Deployment Health Clinical Center

<http://www.usarpac.army.mil/SoldierFamilyWellBeing/Reintegration/Medical%20Reunion-Guide%20to%20Redeployment.htm>

DoD Educational Opportunities

There are excellent guidebooks available for post-deployment challenges on this site.

<http://www.militarystudent.dod.mil/>

Fallen Patriot Fund

<http://www.fallenpatriotfund.org>

FEDERAL

Board of Veteran's Appeals -The Board of Veterans' Appeals (also known as "BVA" or "the Board") is a part of the VA, located in Washington, D.C. Members of the Board review benefit claims determinations made by local VA offices and issue decisions on appeals. These Law Judges and attorneys who are experienced in veteran's law and in reviewing benefit claims are the only ones who can issue Board decisions. Staff attorneys, also trained in veterans' law, review the facts of each appeal and assist the Board members. Web address <http://www.va.gov/vbs/bva/>

Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA)

<http://www.vba.va.gov>

Federal Benefits for Veterans and Dependents (2008 Edition) - This booklet lists the variety of federal benefits available to veterans and their dependents. Federal Benefits for Veterans & Dependents booklet Web address below.

http://www1.va.gov/OPA/vadocs/current_benefits.asp

Understanding the Appeal Process

<http://www.va.gov/vbs/bva/pamphlet.htm>

U.S. Congress - For legislation bills, votes and actions.

<http://Thomas.loc.gov>

U.S. Government Manual

<http://www.gpoaccess.gov/gmanual/index.html>

National Archives & Records Administration

<http://archives.gov/>

Electronic Code of Federal Regulations - The Electronic Code of Federal Regulations (e-CFR) is a prototype of a currently updated version of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR). The e-CFR prototype is a demonstration project. It is not an official legal edition of the CFR. The e-CFR prototype is authorized and maintained by the National Archives and Records Administration's (NARA) Office of the Federal Register (OFR) and the Government Printing Office (GPO). The OFR updates the material in the e-CFR on a frequent basis. <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/ecfr/>

Compensation for Disabilities Associated with the Gulf War Service



gulf war
compensation.doc

Compensation Rate - Compensation & Pension (C&P) Service administers a variety of benefits and services for veterans, their dependents and survivors, including, but not limited to: service-connected compensation, DIC, non-service connected pension, burial & accrued benefits, guardianship and public contact services. To inquire concerning the status of your compensation, DIC, pension, burial, accrued, clothing allowance, automobile, specially adapted housing, or spina bifida claim or to ask any general C&P benefit question, you may call our toll-free number: 1-800-827-1000 or visit the Website. at: <http://www.vba.va.gov/bln/21/Rates/comp01.htm>

Due Process - General Information on Due Process and VA benefits



due process.doc

Duty to Assist - Description and General Information on Duty to Assist



duty to assist.doc

Emergency, Non-emergency, and Fee Basis Care - View the 2008 Edition of the Federal Benefits for Veterans and Dependents

<http://www1.va.gov/opa/vadocs/fedben.pdf>

Environmental Agents - The VA Environmental Agents Service (EAS) administers health care programs related to environmental issues, including Operations Enduring Freedom/Iraqi Freedom (OEF/OIF), Gulf War, Agent Orange, depleted uranium, ionizing radiation, and Project 112 (Including Project SHAD). EAS also oversees the War-Related Illness and Injury Study Centers (WRIISCs). Organizationally, EAS falls under

the Occupational and Environmental Health Strategic Health Care Group of the Office of Public Health and Environmental Hazards.

PROGRAMS

- OEF/OIF Operations
- Gulf War
- Veterans and Agent Orange
- Depleted Uranium Follow-Up Program
- Ionizing Radiation
- Project 112 (including Project SHAD)
- War-Related Illness and Injury Centers (WRIISC)

<http://www1.va.gov/enviragents>

Federal Benefits for Veterans and Dependents 2008

View the 2008 Edition of the Federal Benefits for Veterans and Dependents

<http://www1.va.gov/opa/vadocs/fedben.pdf> or

http://www1.va.gov/opa/vadocs/current_benefits.htm

Evaluation Protocol for Gulf War and Iraqi Freedom Veterans with Potential Exposure to Depleted Uranium (Du)

-This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Handbook outlines the policy and procedures for evaluating Gulf War (GW) veterans, including those who served in Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), with possible exposure to depleted uranium (DU).

<http://www1.va.gov/gulfwar/docs/DUHandbook1303122304.DOC>

http://www1.va.gov/vhapublications/ViewPublication.asp?pub_ID=1158

Forms and Records Request

- Forms on this site are available in several formats. Fillable PDF can be filled on-line, printed, saved and edited. Certain forms can be filled on-line, printed, and saved to your computer but cannot be edited later.

<http://www.va.gov/vaforms/>

General Compensation Provisions

- US Code: Title 38 Veteran Benefits, Part 11 General Benefits, Compensation For Service-Connected Disability Or Death and Subchapter VI General Compensation Provisions.

http://www4.law.cornell.edu/uscode/html/uscode38/usc_sup_01_38_10_II_20_11_30_VI.html

Military Record Requests – To obtain a government form to order a copy of your DD-214. <http://www.archives.gov>

Persian Gulf Registry - Handbook outlining The Persian Gulf Registry (Pgr) Program. (Please note that this program is now referred to as Gulf War):

<http://www1.va.gov/gulfwar/docs/GulfWarManual.DOC>

GENERAL

National Center for PTSD

www.ncptsd.org (good link)

Military OneSource (1-800-342-9647; User ID: military; password: onesource)

www.militaryonesource.com/ (good link)

VA's Seamless Transition Office

www.seamlesstransition.va.gov (good link)

HEALTH ISSUES

Chemical Warfare page

<http://www1.va.gov/shad/>

Disability Examination Worksheets Index, Comp -In this Website, you will find a listing of 57 Disability Examination Worksheets are in use both by the doctors of VHA (Veterans Health Administration) who do the disability examinations and by the rating specialists, hearing officers, and Decision Review Officers of VBA (Veterans Benefits Administration) who do the disability evaluations.

<http://www.vba.va.gov/bln/21/Benefits/exams/index.htm>

VA fact sheets

<http://www1.va.gov/opa/fact/index.asp>

Department of Defense Military Health System

<http://www.tricare.osd.mil>

Vet Centers (Readjustment Counseling)

<http://www.vetcenter.va.gov/>

<http://online.onetcenter.org/crosswalk>

Traumatic Brain Injury

<http://www.traumaticbraininjury.com/>

Fisher House Program – Provides lodging for families of hospitalized active duty service members and veterans who are visiting. There are Fisher Houses at eight VA medical centers (Albany, Bay Pines, Cincinnati, Denver, Houston, Minneapolis, Palo Alto and West Palm Beach). Go to: <http://www.fisherhouse.org>

Hero Miles – Provides free airline tickets to families of OEF/OIF veterans hospitalized in VA or DoD medical centers.



heroMiles_FAQS.pdf

Career Center for Combat Wounded and Disabled Veterans - Provides family support 24/7. Call 1-888-774-1361 or visit Website below.

- Financial Support
- Education and Employment Assistance
- Information on VA Benefits
- Family Counseling
- Resources in Local Communities
- Child Care Support

<http://www.military.com/support>

Military OneSource - Website offers information on:

- Counseling
- Spouse Training, Education & Career
- Children & Youth
- Parenting
- Children's Education
- Money Matters
- Special Needs
- Smooth Moves (Relocation)
- Lifelong Learning, College & Career
- Trauma, Crisis & Violence
- Deployment
- Legal Matters
- Addiction & Recovery
- Substance Abuse
- Other Addictions
- Elder Care
- Military 101
- Transition to Civilian Life
- Health Habits
- Shopping & Services

To contact a Military OneSource consultant for assistance with a particular issue, please use the phone numbers or online tools below, anytime 24/7. Phone Numbers:
Stateside: CONUS: 1-800-342-9647

Overseas: *OCONUS Universal Free Phone: 800-342-96477
Collect from Overseas: OCONUS Collect: 484-530-5908
En español llame al: 1-877-888-0727
TTY/TDD: 1-800-346-9188
Korea DSN: 550-ARMY (2769)
<http://www.militaryonesource.com/skins/MOS/home.aspx>

Geriatrics and Extended Care – VHA's Geriatrics and Extended Care Service advances quality care for aging and chronically ill veterans by providing policy direction for the development, coordination, and integration of geriatrics and long-term care clinical programs. Geriatrics and Extended Care's functional service lines are: Community-Based Long-Term Care, Nursing Home Care, Geriatric Care, and Residential Rehabilitation Care.

Programs Include

- Home and Community-Based Long-Term Care
- Community Residential Care
- Geriatric Research Educational Clinical Centers (GRECCs)
- Geriatric Evaluation & Management (GEM)
- Geriatric Primary Care
- VA Nursing Home Care
- Inpatient Respite
- Contract Community Nursing Home
- State Veterans Homes Program
- Programs & Services
- Construction Grant Program
- Construction Grant Forms
- Alzheimer's/Dementia Care
- Dementia Diagnosis & Management
- Dementia Initiative Update
- Alzheimer's/Dementia FAQ
- Pain Management
- Hospice and Palliative Care

<http://www1.va.gov/geriatricsshq/>

Health Services Research and Development Service (HSR&D) - Research and development services that works to identify and evaluate innovative strategies that lead to accessible, high quality, cost-effective care for veterans and the nation.

<http://www.hsr.d.research.va.gov/>

MS (Multiple Sclerosis) Centers of Excellence - Website consists of a page of information on a critical MS issue. For each issue, the page provides information such as background, an overview, VA-specific information, a recommendation, and some links to additional information.

<http://www.va.gov/ms>

My HealtheVet - The Gateway to Veteran Health and Wellness

www.myhealth.va.gov (good link)

HOMELESS

Military OneSource - See listing under Health

Homeless Veterans

VA offers a wide array of special programs and initiatives specifically designed to help homeless veterans live as self-sufficiently and independently as possible. In fact, the VA is the only federal agency that provides substantial hands-on assistance directly to homeless persons. Although limited to veterans and their dependents, VA's major homeless-specific programs constitute the largest integrated network of homeless treatment and assistance services in the country.

Programs Include

- Outreach to those veterans living on streets and in shelters who otherwise would not seek assistance
- Clinical assessment and referral to needed medical treatment for physical and psychiatric disorders, including substance abuse
- Long-term sheltered transitional assistance, case management, and rehabilitation
- Employment assistance and linkage with available income supports
- Supported permanent housing

<http://www1.va.gov/homeless/>

MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES

Military OneSource - See listing under Health

National Center for PTSD Fact Sheet - Information Specific to National Guard and Reserve Personnel and Their Employers

http://www.ncptsd.va.gov/ncmain/ncdocs/nnc_artics/CouragetoCare_Guard%20and%20Reserve.pdf?opm=1&rr=rr1442&srt=d&echorr=true

Mental Health Program Guidelines - Provides current program guidelines for mental health professionals, planners, and administrators. The Website: reflects changes involving current best practice in mental health care, defines levels of care, stimulate innovative and evidence-based approaches for clinical care, reflect requirements regarding "capacity" contained within the Veterans Healthcare Eligibility Reform Act of 1996, provides a template for individual patient treatment planning while providing definitions and a crossover to VHA's new Decision Support System (DSS) methodology.
http://www1.va.gov/vhapublications/ViewPublication.asp?pub_ID=1094

Mental Illness Research, Education and Clinical Centers - MIRECCs are Mental Illness Research, Education and Clinical Centers established by Congress to investigate the causes of mental illness, and to evaluate both established and new treatments with the goal of bringing best practices in mental health care for veterans into the clinical settings of the VA through educational and treatment programs. Specific program information can be found on the individual MIRECC Websites.
<http://www.mirecc.va.gov/>

S.A.F.E. Program, Support And Family Education: Mental Health Facts for Families. An 18 session curriculum for people who care about someone who has a mental illness or PTSD. Entire curriculum is available for free download on Website.
<http://w3.ouhsc.edu/safeprogram/index.html>

Mental Health Self-Assessment Program - DOD sponsored anonymous mental health/alcohol screening and referral program offered to families and service members affected by deployment or mobilization, available online 24/7.
<http://www.pdhealth.mil/mhsa.asp>

Returning from the War Zone: A Guide for Military Personnel
A National Center for PTSD Fact Sheet
<http://www.ncptsd.va.gov/ncmain/ncdocs/manuals/GuideforMilitary.pdf?opm=1&rr=rr1635&srt=d&echorr=true>

When the Letdown Doesn't Let Up
National Mental Health Association
www.nmha.org/reunions/infoLetdown.cfm

How to Get Back to "Normal"
National Mental Health Association
www.nmha.org/reunions/infoBacktoNormal.cfm

Help for Veterans with PTSD
A National Center for PTSD Fact Sheet
http://www.ncptsd.va.gov/ncmain/information/what_is.jsp

MILITARY

Air Force

www.airforceonesource.com

User ID: air force; password: ready

Army

www.armyonesource.com

User ID: army; password: onesource

Marine Corps

www.mccsonesource.com

User ID: marine; password: semper fi

Navy

www.navyonesource.com

User ID: navy; password: sailor

Military Resources Index

<http://www.military.com/Resources/Index/>

Fallen Patriot Fund

<http://www.fallenpatriotfund.org>

Army Wounded Warrior Program

<http://www.woundedwarriorproject.org/>

Programs through DoD

The Deployment Cycle Support Program

Military OneSource

Building Strong and Ready Families Program

Strong Bonds Marriage Education Program

P.I.C.K. – a partner program in how to choose a mate wisely

The Wounded Warrior Project has a variety of special programs for OEF/OIF veterans.

<https://www.woundedwarriorproject.org/content/view/479/940/>

PARENTING

Reconnecting With Your Children

National Mental Health Association

www.nmha.org/reunions/infoChildren.cfm

Military Homefront (DoD)

<http://www.militaryhomefront.dod.mil/>

Operation Child Care (for National Guard and Reservists)

<http://www.childcareaware.org/en/operationchildcare/>

Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC)

www.militarychild.org

Tips to support Children

<http://www.wnbc.com/family/2104168/detail.html>

SCHOOL SYSTEMS

School Connectedness: Extending Connections to Military Children

Military Child Initiative, John Hopkins School of Public Health

http://www.jhsph.edu/mci/resources/School_Connectedness

Ten Tips for Administrators that Foster Connectedness to Schools

Military Child Initiative, John Hopkins School of Public Health

<http://www.k12.wa.us/OperationMilitaryKids/pubdocs/TenTipsforAdministrators.pdf>

Ten Tips for Parents that Foster Connectedness to Schools

Military Child Initiative, John Hopkins School of Public Health

<http://www.k12.wa.us/OperationMilitaryKids/pubdocs/TenTipsforParents.pdf>

10 Tips for Teachers that Foster Connectedness to Schools

Military Child Initiative, John Hopkins School of Public Health

<http://w3.ouhsc.edu/safeprogram/ResourcesOIF.htm>

VETERANS' ORGANIZATIONS

Directory of Veterans Service Organizations

<http://www1.va.gov/vso/index.cfm?template=view>

American Legion

<http://www.legion.org>

AMVETS

<http://www.amvets.org>

Disabled American Veterans

<http://www.dav.org>

Iraq War Veterans Organization

www.iraqwarveterans.org/index.html

Jewish War Veterans

<http://www.jwv.org/>

Military Order of the Purple Heart

<http://purpleheart.org>

Paralyzed Veterans of American

<http://pva.org>

National Veterans Organization

<http://nvo.org>

Salute America's Heroes

<http://www.saluteheroes.org/>

WOMEN & MINORITY VETERANS

Program & Initiatives for Women Veterans - VHA has designed services and programs to be responsive to the gender-specific needs of women veterans. VA offers comprehensive healthcare services for women including: counseling for sexual trauma; Pap smears, mammography and general reproductive health care; and designated Women Veterans Program Managers at most VA medical centers and Women Veteran Coordinators at each Regional Office.

<http://www1.va.gov/womenvet/>

Center for Minority Veterans -The Center for Minority Veterans is part of the Office of the Secretary. The Center assists eligible veterans in their efforts to receive benefits and services from VA. The Center acts only as a mediator and facilitator. As such the Center does not process claims, handle equal employment complaints, or employee relation problems. The Center is dedicated to ensuring that all veterans are aware of benefits, services, and programs offered by the VA
<http://www1.va.gov/centerforminorityveterans>

YOUTH

Guard Family Youth Website
www.guardfamilyyouth.org

Deployment Kids
www.deploymentkids.com

DOD's Military Student Program: The Military Child in Transition and Deployment
www.militarystudent.dod.mil/

Bibliography

<http://www.ngb.army.mil/about/>

<http://www.navyreserve.com/about/history.jsp>

<http://www.afrc.af.mil/library/history/index.asp>

<http://www.armyreserve.army.mil/ARWEB/MISSION/History.htm>

<http://www.uscg.mil/history/default.asp>

<http://www.answers.com/topic/the-marine-corps-reserve>

<http://www.defenselink.mil/ra/index.html>

<http://www.defenselink.mil/news/May2006/d20060531ngr.pdf>

http://www.seamlesstransition.va.gov/res_guard.asp

Appendix

ATTACHMENT A

Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration
Washington, DC 20420

VHA DIRECTIVE 2008-054

September 9, 2008

COMBAT VETERAN HEALTH CARE BENEFITS AND COPAY EXEMPTION POST-DISCHARGE FROM MILITARY SERVICE

1. PURPOSE: This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Directive establishes the policy and procedures for determining eligibility for Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care benefits and copayment exemption for recently discharged veterans who served in a theater of combat operations after November 11, 1998.

2. BACKGROUND

a. Title 38, United States Code (U.S.C.), Section 1710(e)(1)(D) states that a veteran who served on active duty in a theater of combat operations (as determined by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense) during a period of war after the Persian Gulf War, or in combat against a hostile force during a period of hostilities after November 11, 1998, is eligible for hospital care, medical services, and nursing home care for any illness, even if there is insufficient medical evidence to conclude that such condition is attributable to such service. For purposes of this policy, such veterans are considered to qualify as "combat veterans." Treatment provided under this authority is not subject to copayment requirements.

b. Combat veterans who are treated for a condition that the VA provider finds resulted from a cause other than combat service may, however, be subject to copayments (see subpar. 4c(5), for conditions that the Under Secretary for Health has determined are not related to combat service).

c. On January 28, 2008, President George W. Bush signed into law the "National Defense Authorization Act of 2008" (NDAA), Public Law 110-181. This law, among other things, amended Title 38, United States Code (U.S.C.), Section 1710(e)(3), extending the period in which a combat-theater veteran may enroll for VA health care and receive the care and services described in preceding paragraph 2a. The law now provides that:

(1) Combat veterans who were discharged or released from active service on or after January 28, 2003, are eligible to enroll for VA health care for 5 years from the date of discharge or release and are to be placed in Priority Group (PG) 6 (unless eligible for a higher PG placement). This means that combat-theater veterans who were originally enrolled in PG 6 based on their combat service, but later moved to a lower priority category (due to the law's former 2-year eligibility limitation) are to be placed back in PG 6 for 5 years beginning on the date of their discharge or release from active service. New combat-theater veterans have 5 years from the date of their discharge or release to enroll for VA health care. *NOTE: The 5-year enrollment period applicable to these veterans begins on the discharge or separation date of the service member from active duty military service, or in the case of multiple call-ups, the most recent discharge date.*

THIS VHA DIRECTIVE EXPIRES SEPTEMBER 30, 2013

ATTACHMENT B

COMBAT VETERAN ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION TABLE COMBAT ZONES, HOSTILITIES and MEDALS

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) must use and refer to the Department of Defense (DoD) Website <http://www.defenselink.mil/comptroller> to maintain the listing of designated hostile fire or imminent danger pay areas. Although DoD Hostile Fire or Imminent Danger pay existed prior to November 11, 1998, only proof of such pay on or after November 11, 1998, is acceptable. *NOTE: The DoD Website, the definitions, and the table provided in this Attachment should assist in the determination of combat veteran eligibility.*

1. Definitions

a. **Combat Service.** Veterans who served in combat during a period of war after the Gulf War, or against a hostile force during a period of hostilities after November 11, 1998, qualify, and are eligible for hospital care, medical services, and nursing home care for 2 years after discharge from the military for any illness.

(1) Co-payments may be charged for those conditions which the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) finds resulted from a cause other than such combat service.

(2) Combat zones are designated by an Executive Order from the President as areas in which the United States (U.S.) Armed Forces are engaging or have engaged in combat. An area usually becomes a combat zone and ceases to be a combat zone on the dates the President designates by Executive Order.

b. **Hostilities or Imminent Danger Pay.** Hostile fire pay is defined as pay to anyone exposed to hostile fire or mine explosion, while imminent danger pay is paid to anyone on duty outside the United States area who is subject to physical harm or imminent danger due to wartime conditions, terrorism, civil insurrection, or civil war.

c. **Medals.** Afghanistan Campaign Medal, Iraq Campaign Medal, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal; Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal (does not include Global War on Terrorism Medal); Kosovo Campaign Medal; Southwest Asia Campaign Medal; and other DoD authorized combat related medals.

NOTE: This listing is current as of the date of publication of this directive. For the most current listing see <http://www.defenselink.mil/comptroller>

2. Table Designating Hostile Fire or Imminent Danger Pay Areas after November 11, 1998

AREA	INCLUDES	EFFECTIVE	TERMINATED
Adriatic Sea	Sea area and airspace	Apr 12, 1999	Sep 15, 1999
Afghanistan	Land area and airspace	Nov 11, 1998	

Albania	Land area and airspace	Nov 11, 1998	Mar 31, 2002
Algeria	Land area	Nov 11, 1998	
Angola	Land area	Nov 11, 1998	
Arabian Peninsula *	Locations and airspace above: Persian Gulf and land area of Saudi Arabia	Nov 11, 1998	
Arabian Peninsula *	Surface area of the following sea boundaries: Red Sea, Gulf of Aden, Gulf of Oman and Arabian Sea	Sep 19, 2001	
Azerbaijan	Land area	Nov 11, 1998	
Bahrain	Land area and airspace	Nov 11, 1998	
Bosnia-Herzegovina	Land area and airspace	Nov 11, 1998	
Burundi	Land area	Nov 11, 1998	
Cambodia	Land area	Nov 11, 1998	Oct 31, 2001
Colombia	Land area	Nov 11, 1998	
Cote D'Ivoire (Ivory Coast)	Land area	Feb 27, 2003	
Croatia	Land area and airspace	Nov 11, 1998	
Djibouti	Land area	July 31, 2002	
East Timor	Land area	Sept 30, 1999	Oct 28, 1999
	Land area and airspace	Oct 29, 1999	Oct 31, 2001
	Land area	Nov 1, 2001	
Egypt	Land area	Nov 11, 1998	
El Salvador	Land area	Nov 11, 1998	May 31, 2001
Eritrea	Land	July 31, 2002	
Ethiopia	Land area	Sep 13, 1999	
Georgia, Republic of	Land area	July 31, 2002	
Greece **	Land area	Nov 11, 1998	
Haiti	Land area	Nov 11, 1998	
Hungary **	Land area	May 31, 1999	Sep 15, 1999
Indonesia	Land area	Oct 31, 2001	
Ionian Sea **	Sea area and airspace	Apr 12, 1999	Sep 15, 1999
Iran	Land area	Nov 11, 1998	
Iraq	Land area and airspace	Nov 11, 1998	

**Arabian Peninsula and adjacent sea areas that include Bahrain, Oman, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and Yemen.*

***For detailed specific information regarding designated hostile fire or imminent danger pay areas for these countries, refer to the Website citation.*

AREA	INCLUDES	EFFECTIVE	TERMINATED
Israel	Land area	Jan 31, 2002	
Italy **	Land area	May 31, 1999	Sep 15, 1999
Jordan	Land area	Nov 11, 1998	
Kenya	Land area	July 31, 2002	
Kuwait	Land area and airspace	Nov 11, 1998	
Kyrgyzstan	Land area	Sep 19, 2001	
Lebanon	Land area	Nov 11, 1998	

Liberia	Land area	Nov 11, 1998	
Macedonia	Land area and airspace	Nov 11, 1998	
Malaysia	Land area	Oct 31, 2001	
Mediterranean Sea	Sea area	Apr 11, 2003	July 31, 2003
Montenegro	Land area and airspace	Nov 11, 1998	
Oman	Land area	Sep 19, 2001	
Pakistan	Land area	Nov 11, 1998	
Peru	Land area	Nov 11, 1998	Dec 31, 2001
Philippines	Land area	Oct 31, 2001	
Qatar	Land area and airspace	Nov 11, 1998	
Rwanda	Land area	Nov 11, 1998	
Saudi Arabia	Land area and airspace	Nov 11, 1998	
Serbia	Land area and airspace	Nov 11, 1998	
Sierra Leone	Land area	Nov 11, 1998	
Somalia	Land area and airspace	Nov 11, 1998	
Sudan	Land area and airspace	Nov 11, 1998	
Syria	Land area	July 31, 2003	
Tajikistan	Land area	Nov 11, 1998	
Turkey **	Land area and airspace	Nov 11, 1998	
Uganda	Land area	Jan 19, 2000	
United Arab Emirates	Land area	Sep 19, 2001	
Uzbekistan	Land area	Sep 19, 2001	
Yemen	Land area	May 25, 1999	
Yugoslavia	Land area and airspace	Nov 11, 1998	
Zaire	Land area	Nov 11, 1998	

**Arabian Peninsula and adjacent sea areas that include Bahrain, Oman, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and Yemen.*

***For detailed specific information regarding designated hostile fire or imminent danger pay areas for these countries, refer to the Website citation.*

